

DTP-8220

25X1A MEMORANDUM TO: [] Deputy Chief, OTR

25X1A INFORMATION : Dr. John R. Tietjen, Chief, OMS

25X1A FROM : [] C/AF/ [] 25X1A

SUBJECT : Orientation Course for Returning Overseas Employees

1. As you suggested at our last meeting, I have put in writing some of my thoughts on a possible OTR seminar for returning overseas employees. Most of these ideas are ones I discussed with you and Dr. Tietjen, of OMS on 8 January 1973.

2. I began to consider the desirability of such a program in light of my own and my family's experience during the summer and fall of 1972 on our return from overseas. During this period we experienced a cultural shock of greater degree than we had gone through in adjusting to our two African assignments in the preceding five years. The OTR "Orientation for Overseas" program, we felt, had been invaluable in properly preparing and attuning us for our moves from the U.S. to Africa. As a result, we were properly disposed both physically and mentally for the abrupt changes we experienced. We believe we weathered those moves rather easily and with dispatch. In sharp contrast, we felt our readjustment to life in the United States was more difficult, and we had not expected it would be. The length of time required to adapt exceeded our expectations. To add to the problem there seemed little that this organization offered as a buffer to some of the physical and mental blocks confronting returning employees.

3. While many of these difficulties are experienced by every American involved in moving his family from one location to another, some are unique to organization personnel. They pointed out, a lack of preparation on our part for the changes in "life style" that come with a stateside tour. I believe Americans who have spent some time abroad are usually not sufficiently aware of the changes that have taken place in the United States, the Washington area, and even our neighborhoods and community in the past few years. The point is that the U.S. and the organization we return to are not the ones we left. There is no need to belabor this point as I believe the validity of this observation is shared by most Americans.

4. Concomitant with the adjustment of the employee and his family to a new location and a new social situation, he is faced with an adjustment to a changing CIA. Obviously, the organization can and should assist the employee in making this adjustment to his job. An OTR re-orientation seminar may be one small approach to the problem. For example, the returnee who gets a speeding ticket on Headquarters grounds after having been caught in a radar "speed trap" will be shocked at this experience. His plea: "No one ever told me they were using radar at Headquarters to catch speeders!" will go unheard.

5. The principle areas of concern to both the organization and the employee suggest a seminar program with the following objectives:

A. To reorient the returnee (and his dependents) to this country by a presentation and an explanation of the current course and trends of contemporary U.S. life. Areas of discussion should touch on subjects such as: the drug problem (e.g. its seriousness, extent and influence); the economy (inflation, growth, diversity and how these affect residents of the country); the problems of urban America (pollution, mass transit, the energy crisis, crime, etc.).

B. To reorient the employee to his employer. Here, we see, the largest area of organizational concern. We have an obligation to inform or remind the employee of the "conditions of employment." For example, the employee should be told of any new rules, regulations or changes in practices that have been instituted or modified in his absence and the reasons for them.

C. To provide the returnee a forum to inquire about any imagined, real or apparent "wrongs" he feels have been perpetuated against him by the CIA during his absence. It has been my experience that a tremendous amount of "bum dope" is propagated overseas, principally because of the absence of any authoritative house organ, the usual vehicle employed by an organization in or outside government to "pass the word" to its employees. As a result, there are large areas of misunderstanding and gaps in information particularly in personnel, administrative and financial matters. One minor example, few are aware that they are entitled to an advance on their temporary lodging allowance (TLA).

D. To reacquaint the employee with the purpose, aims and responsibilities of the Agency. Of interest, and importance to most employees would be an explanation of any new areas of interest and areas of achievement. (Part of this objective could be met by showing the recent film of the Director's State of the Agency address.) Even though information about changes in the organization's responsibilities, goals and limitations which evolve in Washington often is relayed to the field, reading about it does not convey the same sense of understanding that hearing about it does.

6. The following areas of presentation would have relevance to returning employees. The list is general and certainly not in any priority. They are mentioned only as starting points for discussion of a training program:

A. Contemporary United States - a look at the U.S. in the 70's.

B. Office of Security Briefing - a updated review of cover, its uses and limitations, personal security in the U.S. and in addition a review of the services and responsibilities of the Office of Security.

C. Office of Medical Services - a frank informative talk on the drug problem in the U.S. and in the Washington area. This should include an explanation of services available in the organization and community. A breakdown should be given of those ailments, injuries or disabilities that fall under organization responsibility and those that do not. An explanation should also be given of the services of the individual's cover organization that are available and which can be used.

D. Personnel - By far the biggest problem area is in the administrative field. What is needed is a talk by knowledgeable organization personnel in the areas of logistics (e.g. HHE); finance(e.g. VIP program) personnel (e.g. information on retirement, hospitalization, insurance, credit union, EAA).

E. The CIA in the 70's - Some comment on where we are going as an organization.

7. My initial thoughts would be to limit any orientation course to not more than two days. One morning or afternoon - or better yet one day - should include the optional attendance of the dependent wife or husband. The course should be mandatory for all returnees. A representative of the Inspector General's office might be interested in sitting in on some of the sessions, particularly if this office is concerned with monitoring the general attitude and problem areas of this segment of organizational life. The course should be run by OTR, and the more inviting and entertaining the better. It would be more worthwhile if such a seminar acquired a reputation from the start of being worth the time spent and not simply just another training program. Use of various educational techniques such as TV, films and round table discussions would be valuable. It would be best if conducted at Headquarters, and better if run frequently enough - once a month perhaps - so that the organization could get the trainees early on in their adjustment period.

8. I hope that these ideas are of interest to you. I would like to continue to work with you if you decide some of them are worth exploring further.

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